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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: POTUS IN CHINA, BURMA, CLIMATE,
AFGHANISTAN,
IRAN;BERLIN

- [1](#)1. Lead Stories
- [1](#)2. U.S.-Chinese Relations
- [1](#)3. U.S.-Burmese Relations
- [1](#)4. APEC--Climate Protection
- [1](#)5. Iranian Nuclear Conflict
- [1](#)6. Future of Guant namo Prisoners
- [1](#)7. Strategy on Afghanistan

- [1](#)1. Lead Stories Summary

ZDF-TV's early evening newscast heute and ARD-TV's early evening newscast Tagesschau opened with reports on Enke's memorial service. The majority of papers opened with reports on the SPD party congress in Dresden and the SPD's demand for the re-introduction of the asset tax. Sueddeutsche headlined: "The World Postpones Climate Protection," while Tagesspiegel opened with the memorial service at Hannover's soccer stadium for Germany's goalkeeper Robert Enke.

- [1](#)2. U.S.-Chinese Relations

In an editorial headlined "Rival, not partner," Sueddeutsche (11/16) remarked that "America's President is still searching for his role in the relationship with a stubborn China." The paper added: "The strategic negligence of Asia during the Bush years is supposed to be over now. Washington wants to engage more deeply again in the world's economically most dynamic region.... President Obama has set the right tone during his courtesy call. The people in Asia like to hear this message; they don't want to be left alone with China's rising influence and power consciousness. Washington is needed as military power as well as an economic counterbalance to Beijing.... However, the friendly tone cannot hide the fact the U.S. faces huge problems in Asia and has not yet found any response to them. Particularly U.S.-Chinese relations must be urgently redefined. Both sides have maneuvered themselves into a situation of mutual dependency that poses dangers, as just seen during the economic crisis. The U.S. import cheap Chinese products on credit; China keeps its currency undervalued and buys American government

bonds with the gains from the export surplus.... As this model is now collapsing, the U.S. and China are increasingly seeking refuge in protectionism. It is therefore absolutely not clear how the relationship of both countries will go on."

Frankfurter Allgemeine (11/14) headlined "Not yet a Superpower - But America believes it can no longer live without China," and analyzed: "America is hoping that China will help it overcome urgent international problems. From the American point of view, these are: strengthening the world economy, climate change, the nuclear dispute with North Korea and Iran, and stabilizing Afghanistan and Pakistan. However, China won't rush to give in to the requests.... Beijing is insecure and lacks trust in America."

In a separate editorial, Frankfurter Allgemeine (11/14) stated: "In Tokyo, President Obama underscored the significance of the alliance with Japan. This is good and continues the right approach of the previous governments. The better relations are between America and its Asian allies, the less we have to be concerned that China's rise will unhinge the power structure in Asia."

Berliner Zeitung (11/16) analyzed: "Washington's diplomats had problems to describe the relationship with words that are politically correct and still sound honest enough for the President. The choice was not great. At the end, there was the desire for a strategic partnership. Although this slogan sounds more credible out of Obama's mouth than out of Bush's, the interests of both countries are difficult to match. Obama aims at renewing America's power and leading role in the world. China's Communist Party wants to push back American's influence and take over the role of a lead

BERLIN 00001449 002 OF 005

nation.

Under the headline "Hu is making life difficult for Obama," Handelsblatt (11/16) reported: "During the APEC summit, China's leadership is unconstructive concerning currency policy-and thus annoys the United States. President Obama must expect Beijing to be unyielding in the dispute over currency policies during his visit to China."

Under the headline "President Obama explains the Internet to the Chinese," Spiegel Online reported on his meeting with young Chinese students in Shanghai: "No politician before has so charmingly told the Chinese that they are living in a dictatorship: U.S. President Obama spoke to selected students in Shanghai and explained the advantages of uncensored news."

FT Deutschland (11/16) commented: "The U.S. and China got closer on practical matters, but they lack a common idea of a better world. President Obama's visit to China can be helpful here.... The mistrust between the Americans and the Chinese is still larger than that between their governments. It is therefore important that the politicians can name more than just practical reasons for their cooperation. We will probably wait in vain for a charm offensive by Hu. However, Obama has the opportunity to repeat what he achieved in Cairo when he meets young people in Shanghai: convince an American audience of his good intentions. That's why it is important not just Obama the technocrat but also Obama the visionary travels to China."

13. U.S.-Burmese Relations

Several papers carried factual news reports. Frankfurter Allgemeine (11/16) headlined; "Obama Meets Burma's Prime Minister," with the sub-headline: "President Calls For Release of Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi." Frankfurter Rundschau(11/16) reported that "after his meeting with General Thein Sein, President Obama said in a press release that he demanded in his talks with the leader of Burma's military junta the early release of Nobel peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi." The paper added: "This phrase may sound like the repetition of an old position but the meeting in Singapore is the symbol of a new U.S. policy in Southeast Asia. The difficult relations towards ASEAN member Burma should no longer prevent relations with this group of nations as in the past, Obama said. In the future, Washington plans to stick to sanctions as long as the

regime does not change its policy. But at the same time Obama, in contrast to his predecessor, wants to cultivate a dialogue with the regime."

Frankfurter Allgemeine (11/16) said in an editorial: "Barack Obama is not afraid of people. And this is probably very good in the case of Burma because the isolation of the military regime has not resulted in any progress in human rights. On the other hand, direct talks with the U.S. president are a reward for the junta without having made any previous concession. That is why it was important that Obama unmistakably insisted on the release of Aung San Suu Kyi. Now we are excited to see if and when the junta will do justice to this demand. If the regime is clever, it will release Aung San Suu Kyi from her house arrest, but will not allow her to influence the elections next year. Then Obama would have his (modest) success, and the junta would save face - and would have outmaneuvered its greatest challenger again."

14. APEC--Climate Protection

Many papers carried reports on the APEC meeting in Singapore and the decision not to agree on binding climate protection goals. Sueddeutsche (11/16) headlined: "The World Postpones Climate

BERLIN 00001449 003 OF 005

Protection - U.S. Calls Binding Agreement 'Unrealistic' - Nations Only Strive For Declaration of Intent." Financial Times Deutschland (11/16) reported "Rescue of the World Cancelled - No Climate Protection Agreement in Copenhagen - Pacific Nations Refuse To Agree on Emission [Reduction] Target." die tageszeitung (11/14) reported under the headline: ", China is most important for the United States": "The U.S. administration considers the People's Republic of China as a competitor. That is why it insists the Chinese commit themselves to accepting new climate [protection] rules. Joel Bluestein, President of the Energy and Environmental Analysis think tank said that Europe is not so important for the United States in climate policies. He added that for the only thing that is important for the Americans is that China and India stick to new climate protection rules since the United States considers primarily China as a competitor for its economy. Bluestein added that climate protection does not play a role among the U.S. public. Copenhagen is considered an issue for the elite and neither the average American nor the decision makers want to know anything about global warming. And this is why there is no pressure on politicians - something that is noted elsewhere."

Sueddeutsche (11/16) editorialized: "For the upcoming climate summit, [politicians] are selling the non-committal declaration of intent to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases as a success. This is frightening, even a little irresponsible. The previously announced epoch-making agreement has now been shrunk to a simple self-commitment without any control. If this situation remains, the global climate summit has failed before it has even begun."

According to Financial Times Deutschland (11/16), "Over the past few months it has become clear that the Europeans are resting on their previous role as trailblazers in climate protection. In Copenhagen of during the times thereafter, they must intensify their role again, even when it comes to financial assistance. It is clear that all states must move, and this refers primarily to the United States without whose support all efforts for the protection of the climate would be in vain. But China and India and other threshold nations must also make their contribution."

Deutschlandfunk (11/15) commented: "How many commonplaces and declarations of intent can the world stand before the climate on earth finally changes with disastrous consequences for millions of people? The APEC summit could have pointed the way to the future and could have resulted in a breakthrough for Copenhagen. But the U.S. government does not want to impose any restrictions on its citizens to protect the climate, since this could slow down economic recovery. Nor do China, Indonesia or other developing nations among the APEC members want to risk their chance to catch up with the industrialized countries. On the contrary, they all together prefer to risk the climate, i.e. the living conditions of future generations which will have to face the consequences. It is no

wonder that the state leaders from all 192 nations from all over the world have promised to come to Copenhagen - and this includes President Obama. No one wants to attend a conference that is doomed to failure right from the start. But this does not reduce the responsibility of the government leaders."

According to Frankfurter Allgemeine (11/16), "many other countries - including the emerging countries and the United States - do not share the climate protection goals of the Europeans. We can regret this or we can only be surprised at the unrealistically high expectations that have burdened the Copenhagen climate summit. If the mood at the APEC summit allows a prediction, then the summiteers in Copenhagen will be unable to approve a binding and comprehensive Kyoto follow-on package. The lesson from Singapore is that, in climate policies, too, it is senseless to be pigheaded. And if the biggest emitters do not join forces, the Europeans can approve tough

BERLIN 00001449 004 OF 005

emission goals, but they will be unable to influence the climate. At best, they will ask too much of their own economies."

Berliner Zeitung (11/16) opined: "The Copenhagen summit has not failed. it only gets a new chance. Denmark's Premier Rasmussen's proposal to agree on political, basic principles first and then come to legally binding commitments a few months later...is reasonable and acceptable. Yes, it will save the talks. It was a hopeless endeavor to stick to the timetable. Instead of running blindfolded to nowhere, the Danish host is adjusting proceedings to reality - and this reality is not that negative. The economic crisis makes states hesitate to spend large amounts of money on climate protection. The situation is likely to be different in six months. And Barack Obama needs more time to overhaul climate policy against the pigheaded opponents in his own country. But the main thing is that the will to do something about climate change is growing everywhere. It would have been nice to celebrate an agreement in December 2009 but a sound, good agreement is better than a windy one. If it is a good one, the delay in the ratification process could quickly be made up. Time can also be a good investment."

15. Iranian Nuclear Conflict

Several papers (11/16) carried relatively short reports on Presidents Obama and Medvedev's press conference. Sueddeutsche headlined "Time for Iran is running out," noting that "the U.S. and Russia called on Tehran to sign an agreement on the processing of uranium outside of Iran. 'Time is running out,' said President Obama during a press conference with his Russian counterpart Medvedev in Singapore. Medvedev said he is still hoping that Iran will send its enriched uranium to Russia to be processed." Frankfurter Rundschau headlined "Obama and Medvedev increase pressure on Iran," adding: "In the nuclear dispute with Iran, Russia and the U.S. increased the pressure on the leadership in Tehran. Time for accepting the international compromise is slowly running out, President Obama said on Sunday after a meeting with his Russian counterpart Medvedev in Singapore. He regretted that Iran has not yet agreed to the proposal mediated by the IAEA." Tagesspiegel headlined: "Obama and Medvedev threaten Tehran."

16. Future of Guant namo Prisoners

Die Welt (11/16) headlined: "Conflict in U.S. over Wirepullers of 9/11 Attacks - Republicans Assail Obama Administration," and reported that an "intense controversy has begun over the meaning and the consequences of the trial of the decade: United States vs. Khaled Sheikh Mohammed and others. Attorney General Eric Holder described his announcement as an 'important step in our efforts to close Guant namo and to call to account those people who have attacked out nation and out interests abroad.' But the Republicans in particular vehemently criticized the plan of the Obama administration." Sueddeutsche (11/14) reported under the headline: "Al-Qaida's Chief Planner to be Put on Trial in New York," and reported that civilian judges will judge over Khalid Sheikh Mohammed."

In an editorial headlined: "Return to the Rule of Law," Die Welt (11/16) noted: "With its decision to put Khaled Sheikh Mohammed on

trial, the Obama administration is taking risks. Nevertheless, Attorney General Holder's decision is right. The Bush administration made the mistake of institutionalizing and perpetuating the emergency situation following 9/11. With this trial and with the planned closure of Guant namo, Obama wants to return to the roots of the U.S. rule of law in which even dangerous criminals have a right to defend themselves. The course of his predecessor was at the expense of U.S. legitimacy and credibility in the world. But this loss of reputation was much more dangerous than

BERLIN 00001449 005 OF 005

all thinkable consequences of the trial of the decade in Manhattan."

"Guantanamo and No End," is the headline of an editorial in Sueddeutsche (11/16) which links the announcement to put Khalid Sheikh Mohammed on trial to the dismissal of President Obama's legal advisor Gregory Craig. The daily judged: "In the end, Craig has become a victim of 9/11. This rotten populism with which politicians of both parties are exploiting this fateful date in Congress has been blocking the dissolution of Guantanamo. There is even a U.S. law that bans the transfer of innocent prisoners to the U.S. mainland. Imagine this: For more than seven years, the nation which describes itself as the 'land of the free' every day, has been keeping harmless men from China, Algeria, and Libya in Guantanamo. It is likely that they would be tortured at home, but the humanitarian gesture to offer them refuge somewhere between Florida and California is strictly forbidden. America will have to learn to live with Guantanamo. Even if the camp in Cuba is closed, the government will have to incarcerate 120 prisoners on the mainland. Khalid Sheikh Mohammed has lost, but so has Gregory Craig."

17. Strategy on Afghanistan

Suedwestrundfunk radio (11/14) commented: "Guttenberg is a smart tactician. He has shown this talent with his approach to Opel.... He speaks of warlike circumstances. In comparison with the unbearable gibberish of his predecessor, Franz-Josef Jung, Guttenberg appears to be a shining figure of political clarity.... He is deploying an additional company to Kunduz... However, these 120 troops are only a drop in the ocean. Guttenberg's pressure on Karzai will also show no impact because Karzai knows that, despite the election fraud and the corrupt government, there is no alternative to him. The German defense minister is simply joining in the international choir. This lacks substance.... No decisions are being made prior to the international conference in Afghanistan.... Everything goes on like it is. We are buying time until Obama has decided on his new strategy... The fact is that the international community has taken only half-hearted action in Afghanistan, like Germany in the efforts to train police forces. Opportunities were missed, serious mistakes were made, the Taliban could restructure themselves. Can a conference repair the damage? I'm afraid it won't be able to do this. Policy on Afghanistan has reached a dead end, and this is devastating. Guttenberg's nice images and words might calm things down, however, they also make clear that he does not know the way out."

MURPHY